

Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

May 2006

City of Berwyn
Mayor Michael O'Connor

Berwyn Police Department
Chief William Kushner



any time.



The Facts About Sexual Assault:

Sexual assault can happen to anyone, anywhere, at any time!

The typical stereotype of a sexual assault suspect is a sex crazed maniac or psychopath. In reality, people who sexually assault are not always strangers to their victims. In over one third of reported cases, the rapist is an acquaintance, neighbor, friend, or relative.

Although sexual conduct is a component of this crime, suspects mainly want to hurt, humiliate and degrade another human being. Regardless of the sexual nature of the crime, it is a crime of violence!

How can it happen?

"When the salesman knocked on the door, I let him in. He was friendly at first, then all of a sudden he grabbed me..."

"I was downstairs in the laundry room of our apartment building. I had been there alone many times before, but this time..."

"I was walking to work in broad daylight. A car stopped next to me. The driver leaned over and asked for directions. When I got close to the car, he pulled out a gun and told me to get in..."

These simple examples show that the tragedy of sexual assault can strike anyone, anywhere, at

Reduce Your Risk: What Should You Do To Prevent Sexual Assault?

- Always be aware of your surroundings.
- Stay in well-lighted areas as much as possible.
- Walk confidently, directly, at a steady pace.
- Rapists look for someone who appears vulnerable.
- Walk on the side of the street facing traffic.
- Walk on the sidewalk.
- Avoid doorways, bushes, and alleys where rapists can hide.
- If you think you are being followed, walk quickly to areas where there are people and lights.
- If a car appears to be following you, turn and walk in the opposite direction, or walk on the other side of the street.
- Be careful when people stop you for directions or money. Always reply from a distance, and never get too close to the car.
- If you are in trouble or feel you are in danger, don't be afraid to attract help any way you can.
- Scream, yell, or run away to safety.
- Always lock your car. Keep your car locked when you are away from it to keep someone from hiding and waiting inside.
- When you are inside the car, lock the doors.
- Look inside and around your car before you get in. Be alert to other people in parking areas, especially those close to your vehicle.
- If you think you are being followed, drive to a public place or a police station to get help.

In This Issue...

The facts about Sex Assault	1-2
"PROM" safety tips	3-4
Events	4

- If your car breaks down, open the hood and stay inside your locked vehicle until police arrive.

What Should You Do If You're a Victim?

Seek help immediately!

If you are injured, phone 9-1-1 for medical assistance or go to a hospital emergency room. An important thing to remember is that you should not touch anything, change your clothes, wash, bathe, or shower until you have been to the hospital and contacted the police. Doing any of these things will destroy valuable evidence. Evidence that is needed by the police and the prosecutor to identify, arrest and convict your attacker.

The emotional impact of a sexual assault is great and both medical professionals and law enforcement officers know this. It will be difficult for you to confide in strangers about what has happened to you. Every effort is made to have family members, friends, clergy or anyone you want present to provide support during this difficult time.

The Child Victim

Each year thousands of children suffer some type of sexual abuse. Who is the typical offender? In over one third of the sexual abuse cases involving children, the child and child's family know the offender. In other words, the abuser is often a parent, relative, or close family friend.

Because children are so trusting and defenseless, they are especially vulnerable to sexual assault.

Children often make up stories, but they rarely lie about being a victim of sexual assault. If a child tells you about being touched or assaulted, take it seriously. Your response helps determine how the child will react to the abuse. Stay calm. Explain that you are concerned about what happened, but not angry with the child. Do not go into a detailed account with your child; immediately contact the Berwyn Police Department.

Many children feel guilty as if they had provoked the assault. Children need to be reassured that they are not to blame, and that they are right to tell you about what happened.

Sometimes a child may be too frightened or confused to talk directly about the abuse. Be alert for any changes in behavior that might hint that the child has suffered a disturbing experience

Know the Warning Signs of Abuse

Some general signs are present in children who seem:

- Nervous around adults or afraid of certain adults
- Very passive and withdrawn—or aggressive and disruptive
- Always tired, complaining of nightmares or not sleeping well
- Fearful and anxious
- Abused children may also show sudden changes in behavior or school performance
- Sexual knowledge or behavior beyond what is normal for the child's age



Tips for a Safe Prom Night:

Make sure prom night is a positive experience you'll always remember. Don't drink alcohol or use any other substances that will compromise your ability to make good decisions.

- Discuss plans with your friends/date ahead of time. Know your agenda and communicate with your parents.
- Plan ahead what you will say or do if someone offers you alcohol or another illegal drug. Use phrases such as, "No thanks," "Are you kidding? I want to remember this night!," or "Actually, I'd rather have a soda. Do you have one?"
- Know your date before you go. If your date is a set-up, try to take a walk at a park or go for a smoothie before the big night. Both you and your parents will feel better about you staying out late with someone you know.
- Find out what your curfew is and share it with your date/friends before prom night. Discuss with your parents after-curfew possibilities (the party at your friend's house or early morning breakfast at your place).
- Ask a trusted adult to be near a phone and to be available prom night in case you need to call them.
- Take your, or borrow your parent's, cell phone and slip it into your purse or pocket.

and police of your special event, and don't let guests come and go.

Get to Your Destination Safely

- Keep an eye on your date/driver to make sure he/she doesn't drink any alcohol. Alcohol slows reaction time and impairs vision, clear thinking, judgment, and coordination.
- There are more drunk drivers on the roads during the weekend. Keep a close eye on oncoming drivers, as impaired drivers tend to drive toward lights.
- Know where you're going before prom night and have directions to those places.
- After your red light turns green, wait a second before pulling into the intersection, just to be safe.
- Drive on well lit roads, and carry a phone if possible. That way, if you get a flat tire, you're not stranded, waving down a cab with your silk tie or sequin purse.
- Beautiful girls are distracting enough -- keep the radio volume turned low enough so your driver can concentrate on getting you to the fun. And don't forget your seat belt!
- Make sure the car has enough gas to get where you're going (besides, parents are definitely on to the "But we ran out of gas" excuse!).
- Remember -- if you find yourself in an uncomfortable position, or if the driver isn't safe, have enough money with you to call a friend or a cab.

Ways to Have Fun without Drinking

- Go to a late-night diner all dressed up and order fries and a milkshake; it'll hit the spot and you'll get tons of attention!
- Buy a bunch of one-use cameras, pass them around to your friends, and set a goal to use every last picture before the night is through!
- Have a "After Party" party at someone's house; don't forget to have lots of sodas, chips, and dips. You'll be hungry after all that dancing!
- Visit an arcade with your date or with a group, and challenge each other to a game or two.
- Go to a late night coffee house and relive the evening for hours!
- After prom, gather in a friend's house or backyard, take your shoes off, turn up the music, and really dance! Don't forget to notify neighbors

Things You Can Do In Your Community

- Before prom, work with The Berwyn Police Department Youth Division. Contact Commander Frank Cimaglia: 795-5600 ext.106 to plan a compliance check to help the police identify area retail alcohol outlets that are illegally selling alcohol to people under 21.
- Work with school officials to organize an assembly that sends positive messages about abstaining from alcohol and other drugs and shows the possible consequences.
- Work with your school's prom committee to plan a fun and safe after-prom celebration.
- Help your or your friends' little brother or sister say "no" to alcohol. See if your local elementary school knows about "Protecting You/Protecting Me", an alcohol prevention curriculum for grades 1-5.
- Call your local MADD chapter and ask how you can prevent underage drinking in your community.

Stats You Need to Know

- Despite what you may have heard, less than 30% of 12-20 year olds report drinking.
- You may be alive today because the legal drinking age is 21. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates these laws have saved over 22,000 lives from 1975 to now.
- Females process alcohol differently than males; smaller amounts of alcohol are more intoxicating for females regardless of their size.
- The same amount of alcohol is in a 12oz. bottle of beer, a 12oz. wine cooler, and a 5oz. glass of wine.
- Over a quarter of all rape victims and over 40 percent of those convicted of rape had been drinking at the time of the attack.

Alcohol is the #1 youth drug problem; it kills more people under 21 than all other illicit drugs combined.

Information obtained from M.A.D.D.- Mothers Against Drunk Drivers more information is available at www.madd.org

***Your Life is Just Beginning,
Don't End It before it Starts.***

*** Stay Safe * Stay Smart *Stay Strong**
Have Fun and Make Memories

To contact the liaison officer regarding police matters for your zone, please locate your zone and liaison below.

- **Zone #1** Roosevelt to Cermak / Harlem to Wesley (west side of street)
- **Zone #2** Roosevelt to Cermak / Wesley (east side of street) to Lombard
(Zones 1 & 2) Detective Louis Mazza 795-2153 Lmazza@ci.berwyn.il.us
- **Zone #3** Cermak to BNSF tracks / Harlem to Wesley (west side of street)
Unit Commander Frank Cimaglia 795-2106 Fcimaglia@ci.berwyn.il.us
- **Zone #4** Cermak to BNSF tracks / Wesley (east side of street) to Lombard
Detective Joe Santangelo 795-2151 Jsantangelo@ci.berwyn.il.us
- **Zone #5** BNSF tracks to Pershing Rd. / Harlem to Wesley (west side of street)
Detective Joe Green 795-2152 Jgreen@ci.berwyn.il.us
- **Zone #6** BNSF tracks to Pershing Rd / Wesley (east side of street) to Lombard
Officer Michael Vokac 795-2112 Mvokac@ci.berwyn.il.us

For more information on
Neighborhood Watch or if
you would like to become a

Interested in becoming a
Neighborhood Watch
Block Captain? Please
contact Jeanmarie Hajer:
788-2660 ext. 290 or
JHajer@ci.Berwyn.il.us

National Night Out **Tuesday, August 1st, 2006**

*Sponsored by The Berwyn Police Department, The City of Berwyn, Berwyn Park Dist. &
North Berwyn Park Dist.*

National Night Out is an annual event designed to:

- ◆ Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness
- ◆ Generate support and participation in anti-crime efforts
- ◆ Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community relations
- ◆ Send a message to criminals, letting them know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back

The City of Berwyn will be participating in our second annual National Night Out event. National Night Out is a unique crime and drug prevention event scheduled annually for the first Tuesday in August. On Tuesday, August 1st, the year's biggest event will take place at the Morton West parking lot and field house. There will be events for all ages. The Police and Fire Departments will put on demonstrations to educate the citizens of Berwyn on safety and crime prevention techniques.

National Night Out will give citizens the chance to meet and interact with Police and Fire personnel. More information about Berwyn National Night Out activities will be posted on the city website, **www.berwyn-il.gov**, as the date approaches.

City-Wide Neighborhood Watch Gang Awareness Seminar

May 17, 2006 - 7:00pm

Berwyn Police Dept. - 6401 W. 31st St.

Are you concerned about gang activity in Berwyn?

What are the warning signs parents should look for?

What should parents do if they think their child is in a gang?

Why do kids join gangs?

Learn the FACTS from the FICTION

Presented by:

Tactical Coordinator Sgt. Gerald Conoboy

Unit Commander Frank Cimaglia

Upcoming Events:

Mother's Day Flower Sale - May 13th

3300 Grove - City Municipal Lot

Farmer's Market Days

Saturdays May 13th-Sept. 16th -3300 Grove

Berwyn's Cartopia

June 23 - 24

Cartopia - The newest Art Car event - will be held right here in Berwyn.